

Surprising Tips to Rest Body, Mind and Soul

Our bodies need it, our minds crave it -- still for many of us, a full night's sleep is just a wishful dream.

With that in mind, here's our list of favourite tips, backed by research, to encourage **body**, **mind** and **soul** to work together for a good night's sleep.

Body:

Catch some rays: Park a block further away, get off a stop earlier, stand outside your car when waiting to pick up the kids after school. Researchers say we need 10 minutes minimum outdoors in daylight to help set our body's internal clock for a better nighttime.

Exercise regularly: Even just 30 minutes, three or four times a week will boost your sleep.

To help make this happen, we favour Amoena active wear. It's not only excellent quality, it's also easy to wear under everyday clothes. So you can go easily from shopping or work to a Zumba class or a treadmill, without having to spend time changing.

A major study of insomniacs 55-years and over confirms the exercise regiment works, but it takes a bit of time before it affects sleep. It's worth being patient. After 16 weeks of regular exercise, study participants enjoyed a significant increase in the quality and length of their sleep.

Get comfortable: The perfect nightwear should fit and feel soft as silk. That's one of the reasons why we opt for Amoena sleepwear: These lovely PJs are made with ultra-soft Modal. This fabric comes from beechwood, and is naturally breathable, luxuriously smooth, and cool to the touch. And touch matters -- when it comes to PJs.

Modal is also less likely to pile, fade or shrink so you get to enjoy your favourite jammies for a long time.

Consider a humidifier: While you sleep, the vapor will work to lubricate our nose and throat membranes. This can stop us from being woken up in the middle of the night because we feel dry, clogged, or our throat is scratchy.

Enjoy a warm bath before bed: A soothing soak, with Epsom or your favourite salts, relaxes the muscles. Keep a big towel and bathrobe close by so you don't get chilly and tense up when you get out.

Ban the blues: Any light at night can decrease the body's production of the hormone melatonin, which regulates sleep. But the worst light is blue light. You can download blue-blocking software for your computer, or even buy blue-blocking glasses. Experts say it's best to avoid blue-light at least 30 minutes before bed.

Wear socks: Cold toes make for sleeplessness, confirm scientists. Their advice: Dedicate a pair of socks that are soft and light for bedtime wear. Hot feet make our body hot which could cause you to wake up, so avoid heavy socks.

Mind:

Use the evening hours to transition to sleep hours: It's important to gear down to a calm state of mind by bedtime. Science tells us that what we wear sends a message to our brain. And that brings us to another reason we love Amoena PJs.

All Amoena PJs and loungewear have a built in bra shelf, and breast form pockets, for those that wear one, essential support, great to wear around the house. This means you can step out of your day clothes in early evening, and still look presentable and feel confident. Meanwhile, the PJs and loungewear are working their magic, putting you in a relaxed mind frame.

Watch a funny show: The best way to shake off the day is to laugh it off. Experts say a restful state of mind is more likely when you end your day on a smile. So if you're not already in your cozies, put them on and snuggle down for a silly time-out.

Meditate, colour, knit: Sitting meditation, or meditative activities like colouring, prior to bedtime are great to quiet the mind.

Read: Reading in bed can help by tiring out your eyes, but make it a real book (or an e-reader that does not emit blue light). Also, shelve any book on work-related subjects or stories that can trigger your fears.

Breathe in ... lavender: Research conducted by universities in the US and the UK have all found that people who sniff lavender, intermittently over eight minutes at bedtime, report getting to sleep easier, and having a better quality of sleep. The purple flower has been given an official stamp of approval as a calming agent at conferences on sleep science.

Soul:

Say thank-you: Arianna Huffington, author of the bestselling book *The Sleep Revolution*, urges struggling sleepers to write down three things they are grateful for before turning off the light.

Arianna says the effect of writing three things you feel good about, be these big or small, is remarkable. It's instantly reassures and calms an anxious mind, and decreases midnight wake-ups.

Take the path of least resistance: Nothing keeps us more awake than worrying about not sleeping. That's because anxiety floods our body with adrenaline. So instead of fighting to get to sleep, experts suggest we self-soothe by telling ourselves, "It's perfectly okay if I just rest and relax tonight, I'll still be fine for tomorrow."

Rest, officially called "quiet wakefulness" is the next best thing to sleep, and sometimes good enough. And don't look at the clock, instead set the alarm and let the night unfold as it will, peacefully.

Sweet dreams